

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

**IS THERE A GAP IN OUR MILITARY'S SEXUAL  
HARASSMENT POLICY BETWEEN SENIOR LEADERS AND  
COMMANDERS WHO IMPLEMENT THE POLICY?**

by

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## *Preface*

I would like to thank those who inspired me to conduct a research project on sexual harassment of which appears to be such a controversial issue among senior military leaders. With the amount of negative publicity focused on sexual harassment within the military, I became intrigued with finding out how the Secretary of Defense's "Zero Tolerance" policy affects or eliminates sexual harassment within the military environment. Unfortunately, I am skeptical about believing the policy of "Zero Tolerance" will and of itself aid in transforming the culture and attitudes of an organization. I believe there is more involved than just changing attitudes, you have to change the mindset and unfortunately it takes years.

The majority of the credit of my research goes to Dr. Mickey Dansby, Director of Research, Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, for bestowing me the opportunity to embark on a subject where the utility of this research could be shared or assisted in future sexual harassment study. Additionally, I equally thank two faculty members from the research department of Air Command and Staff College, Dr. Abigail Gray and Lieutenant Colonel Royce H. Dasinger. These two individuals took time out of their busy schedules during and after duty hours critiquing and refining my survey, to include locating other Air Force colleagues and functional experts who are well versed on sexual harassment issues within the military. Without question, the data analysis of my survey could not have been made possible without the support and candid feedback from

my fellow military and civilian classmates of the 1998-99 Air Command and Staff College. Lastly, and surely not least, I thank Lieutenant Colonel Michael O. Simpkins, my Faculty Research Advisor, for his patience and unconditional support in keeping me focused and providing me direction towards producing a quality product.

### *Abstract*

The focus of this research paper is to review the Department of Defense's (DOD) current Equal Opportunity (EO) policy and discuss how the policy of sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance" has been implemented in the armed services by senior leaders (O-7 and above). The effectiveness of this policy relies heavily upon the ability of commanders to indoctrinate this policy and influence its intent throughout all levels of their unit. Therefore, the focus of this research is to determine if commanders are implementing and applying the policy of "Zero Tolerance" as it was intended by senior leaders. In order to achieve this focus, the research answers the following questions: Is the policy of "Zero Tolerance" too ambiguous or difficult to manage and do commanders have the appropriate knowledge, tools, and training needed to prevent sexual harassment from occurring within their units. To measure the effectiveness of this policy, I surveyed majors attending the 1998-99 Air Command and Staff College in residence course to validate my thesis: Is there a gap in our military's sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and commanders who implement the policy?

## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

*The Human Goals Charter of the Department of Defense states: “Our nation was founded on the principle that the individual has infinite dignity and worth.” This is and must remain our guiding principle.*

— Edwin Dorn, Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness  
Feb 4, 1997

In light of the Navy’s Tailhook, the Army’s Aberdeen and other unpublicized sexual harassment incidents within the military, the Department of Defense (DOD) expanded its emphasis on the policies of sexual harassment. In 1994, the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) established a sexual harassment policy of “Zero Tolerance” which is the foundation used by all military service secretaries to provide direction and vision towards combating sexual harassment within their corps. Additionally, steps have already been initiated throughout all the services to evaluate existing sexual harassment policies and modify them, if necessary, to ensure they are in compliance with the SECDEF’s guidance. Also, the service secretaries have made a significant effort towards increasing the awareness of sexual harassment through the development of instructional guides and checklists, thus equipping commanders and supervisors with the preventive tools necessary to maintain a working environment free from harassment. Not stopping there, the service secretaries have directed an expansion of sexual harassment training requirements by mandating all members to receive interval sexual harassment training throughout their military career. Despite the attention and guidance provided by senior

leadership in aiding operational commanders in combating sexual harassment, the issue of sexual harassment still continues to be a pervasive problem within the military environment. This paper focuses on the concern that the policy of “Zero Tolerance” is not being implemented in the way it was intended by senior leaders. If true, is it because commanders do not understand the policy or is the concept too broad and difficult to manage?

Therefore, this study assumes that a gap exists between the expectations of senior leaders in the implementation of the policy and the commanders who are responsible for applying this policy in a sexual harassment situation. Additionally, this research questions the validity and timeliness of the sexual harassment training received by field grade officers, particularly majors, as they progress to command.

This research synopsizes the types of initiatives enacted by the DOD service secretaries and reviews how they are administered throughout all services. However, the primary focus of this research is to determine how the Air Force prepares and trains its future commanders effectively in establishing an environment free from sexual harassment, thus, “Zero Tolerance.” The hypothesis of this research is to prove that the Air Force’s future and present commanders application of the Secretary of Defense’s “Zero Tolerance” policy is not being executed the way it was intended by senior leaders. This research will also determine if there is a deficiency in the quality and timeliness of the training provided to commanders, thus affecting their ability to conduct sexual harassment inquiries and prevent harassment from occurring throughout their units. To assess the magnitude of this deficiency, this study examines the clarity of the sexual harassment “Zero Tolerance” policy and explores the equity and timeliness of the sexual harassment training received by commanders. Finally, this research evaluates the efficacy of the

type of sexual harassment preventive tools available to commanders, as they inculcate “Zero Tolerance” throughout all their supervisory channels.

Next, a survey centered around the opinions of future commanders on the “Zero Tolerance” policy; the timeliness and value of the sexual harassment training; and the tools available to a conduct a sexual harassment inquiry was used as the basis of this research to validate the location of the gap, if one exists, between the concept of “Zero Tolerance” and the application of the policy. Finally, this research will make recommendations for additional research by DOD for similar subject matter review.

## Chapter 2

### Sexual Harassment Policy

*Our policy on sexual harassment is crystal clear. We believe that sexual harassment is wrong, ethically and morally. We believe it is wrong from the point of view of military discipline. And we believe it is wrong from the point of view of maintaining proper respect in the chain of command. And for all of these reasons therefore, we have a zero tolerance for sexual harassment.*

—Secretary of Defense William J. Perry, November 13, 1996

In order to determine if a gap exists in the military's sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance" policy between senior leaders and commanders who are responsible for implementing the policy, it is important to first understand what is considered sexual harassment, how DOD defines it, and what initiatives have been employed by senior leaders to indoctrinate their policy to their military personnel.

In 1972, the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) was established to enforce Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. Current sexual harassment law under EEOC guidelines on discrimination because of sex, codified at 29 C.F.R. 1604.11 states the following:

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of section 703 of Title VII. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when (1) submission to such conduct is made either explicit or implicit a term or condition of an individual's employment, (2) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.<sup>1</sup>

The EEOC also defined two basic requirements for sexual harassment: that the conduct in question, whether physical or verbal, or both is unwelcome and of a sexual nature. Conduct is not welcome when it is unsolicited, when the victim has done nothing to incite it, and when the victim views that conduct as undesirable or offensive. The requirement that sexually harassing conduct, whether physical or verbal, be of a sexual nature is typically fulfilled by such frequently cited behaviors as propositions, comments on the sexual areas of a woman's body, dirty jokes, pictures of nude or sexually suggestive individuals, and sexually oriented cartoons.<sup>2</sup> Figure 1 shows a spectrum of the types of sexual harassment behaviors.<sup>3</sup>

Visual	Verbal	Written	Touching	Power	Threats	Force
Ogling	Unwanted Requests for dated	Unwanted love poems	Violating Space	Relationships	Quid Pro Quo	Rape
Staring	Questions about personal life	Unwanted love letters	Patting	Using positions to requests dates, sex, etc.	Demand	Physical assault
Posters	Lewd comments	Obscene poems	Grabbing		Loss of job	
Magazines	Dirty/sexual jokes	Unwanted cards	Caressing			
Flyers	Whistling		Kissing			

**Figure 1. Sexual Harassment, A Spectrum of Behavior Patterns**

Within the armed forces, Executive Order 9981, which was signed by President Harry S. Truman, 26 July 1948 established the policy of Equality Treatment and Opportunity for all persons without regard to race, color, religion, or national origin. Additionally, it established Equal Opportunity as a fundamental principle in the armed forces of the United States.<sup>4</sup>

In 1994, the Secretary of Defense, William S. Cohen established a separate Equal Opportunity policy supporting the prevention of sexual harassment better known as “Zero Tolerance.” Intensified efforts to combat sexual harassment resulted after the Navy was rocked by charges following a Tailhook convention in 1991: charges of drill instructors sexually harassing and assaulting trainees at the Army’s Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland Fort Leonard, Missouri and Fort Sam Houston, Texas.<sup>5</sup> The secretary’s “Zero Tolerance” policy served as the impetus to review and re-energize the DOD’s programs and policies for preventing and dealing with sexual harassment. The revised policy prohibited sexual harassment in the armed services. The definition adopted by DOD mirrored that of the EEOC. It further outlined that any supervisor or commander who used or condoned any form of sexual behavior to control, influence or affect the career, pay or job of a military or civilian employee is engaging in sexual harassment. Additionally, the policy states that any military member or civilian employee who makes deliberate or repeated unwelcome verbal comments, gestures or physical contact of a sexual nature in the workplace is also engaging in sexual harassment.<sup>6</sup>

In March 1994, the Deputy Secretary of Defense established the Defense Equal Opportunity Council (DEOC) task force headed by the Secretary of the Air Force, then Sheila Widnall and the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, Edwin Dorn, to develop a comprehensive sexual harassment policy.<sup>7</sup> The purpose of the group was to review the military services’ discrimination complaint systems and recommend improvements, including the adoption of department-wide standards, and to conduct the first department-wide sexual harassment survey.

In 1995, the task force developed three sexual harassment surveys, Forms A, B, and C. The first, Form A, replicated the 1988 survey that produced the baseline data on sexual harassment in

the active duty services. The sole purpose of administering the Form A survey was to compare sexual harassment incident rates in 1988 and 1995. Table 1 outlines the results of that survey.

**Table 1. 1995 Form A Results<sup>8</sup>**

TYPE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	WOMEN		MEN	
	1988	1995	1988	1995
<b>Any Type (one or more)</b>	64	55	17	14
<b>Actual/Attempted Rape/Assault</b>	5	4	0	0
<b>Pressure for Sexual Favors</b>	15	11	2	1
<b>Touching, Cornering</b>	38	29	9	6
<b>Looks, Gestures</b>	44	37	10	7
<b>Letters, Calls</b>	14	12	3	2
<b>Pressure for Dates</b>	26	22	3	2
<b>Teasing, Jokes</b>	52	44	13	10
<b>Whistles, Calls</b>	38	23	5	3
<b>Attempts at Other Activities</b>	7	7	2	2
<b>Other Attention</b>	5	5	1	1

Form A survey respondents of sexual harassment show a significant decline since 1988. In 1995, 19 percent of respondents (55 percent of women and 14 percent of men) reported one or more incidents while at work the year prior to the survey compared with 22 percent of the respondents (64 percent of women and 17 percent of men) in 1988. The survey defined 10 categories of reportable behavior; reports of incidents declined in most categories.<sup>9</sup> If the results of this survey identified a decline in behaviors of the respondents, then why was Form B survey developed? The sole purpose of Form A was only to compare 1988 and 1995 reports. Unfortunately, Form A provided no opportunity for respondents to report certain types of behavior related to sexual harassment, limited incidents to the work place and contained no items that measured some areas of importance to policy makers. The 1988 survey limited the reporting of incidents to those that occurred at work. Therefore, an expanded survey, Form B was developed to broaden the context to include experiences related to gender, included unwanted

sex-related attention in situations involving (on or off duty; on or off base/post) and/or civilian employees and contractors employed in the workplace. The main purpose of the second survey was to assess:

- What elements of the active duty military population had unwanted experiences that they believed were gender related;
- The context, location, and circumstances under which such experiences occurred;
- The extent to which these experiences were reported and, if reported, members' satisfaction with the complaint process and response;
- The amount and effectiveness of training received by members on topics related to sexual harassment; and
- Service members' views of current policies designed to prevent, reduce or eliminate sexual harassment, of leadership commitment and progress in reducing the incidence of sexual harassment<sup>10</sup>

Administration of Form B survey more than doubled the possible categories of reporting harassment, it clearly ensured the rates would be higher than from Form A and 1988 surveys. Based on the responses to the 25 items from Form B, 43 percent of active-duty military (78 percent of women and 38 percent of men), indicated they had experienced one or more of the behaviors listed in the survey during the previous months.

TYPE OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT	WOMEN 1995	MEN 1995
<b>Any Type (one or more)</b>	78	38
Sexual Assault	6	1
Sexual Coercion	13	2
Unwanted Sexual Attention	24	8
Sexist Behavior	63	15
Crude/Offensive Behavior	70	35

**Table 2. 1995 Form B Results<sup>11</sup>**

As a comparison of Forms A and B from 1988 to 1995, show that there is evidence that sexual harassment declined significantly in the active-duty military services. During this period, the percentage of women reporting incidents of sexual harassment declined nine percentage points, and the percentage of men reporting incidents declined three percentage points. Although the facts of the data appeared promising for the future of the military services, further analysis recognized considerable amount of unreported incidents, mishandling of cases, and the perception of apathetic attitudes within the supervisory channels remained a major challenge for all services.<sup>12</sup> The task force concluded that only a complaints processing system that ensured both unit effectiveness and fairness to individuals would enhance military readiness.<sup>13</sup> On May 12, 1995, DEOC task force made 48 recommendations of which five were to help military Equal Opportunity (EO) programs to fulfill the goals of unit effectiveness and readiness:

- (1) All commanders' personal commitment to EO must be visible and unequivocal;
- (2) DOD establish goals, principles and standards of performance;
- (3) Clear, concise, written policies to ensure that service men and women know; that discrimination and harassment are forbidden, how to recognize these offenses, how to file complaints, and how the rights of all involved will be protected;
- (4) EO and human relations training should continue throughout a military member's career. Training for leaders and commanders should stress their personal involvement and accountability;
- (5) Complaint systems should be: prompt, thorough and fair; allow informal resolution; include support services; prevent reprisals; and provide appropriate punishments.<sup>14</sup>

However, all the recommendations were approved by the Deputy Secretary of Defense and incorporated in DOD and Service Directives.<sup>15</sup> These recommendations made by the task force energized all the service chief of staffs' to further enhance or refine if necessary their current EO policies.

## Air Force

On February 4, 1997, former Secretary of the Air Force Sheila E. Widnall prepared a statement to the Senate Armed Services Committee on the Air Force's approach to ending sexual harassment. The thrust of the Air Force's policy measured up to the same level of the Secretary of Defense's sexual harassment policy of "Zero Tolerance."<sup>16</sup> Simply stated, "Commanders must demonstrate visible, unequivocal leadership and personal commitment to equal opportunity, and build an organizational culture where members are valued, respected, and treated fairly."<sup>17</sup>

The Air Force's policy prohibiting sexual harassment has been in existence since 1980. In 1981, the Air Force built a unit climate assessment program to help commanders assess their organization's human relations climate which is conducted by the EO staff six months after a commander assumes command. The assessment is conducted every 2 years or upon request from the commander. Additionally, in May 1982, officials took a more proactive approach by giving all personnel a two-hour course in sexual harassment awareness. Two years later, the awareness program was incorporated into the human relations training, which is given to Air Force members upon the arrival of their first duty station and during professional military education.<sup>18</sup> However, after the wake of the 1991 Tailhook incident, the Air Force further intensified its efforts and took an even tougher campaign against sexual harassment. Aggressive steps were taken to attack at the heart of the issue:

- Emphasis on commandership, selection and education for command, commander responsibilities and personal accountability.
- Continuous communication of core values to internalize for all persons the essence of the standards of the military professional.
- Revision of the Air Force instruction on professional and unprofessional relationships to make clear the inherent conflict of interest in fraternization and other unprofessional relationships.
- Closer attention to the special trust and responsibilities that go with the student-teacher or trainer-trainee relationship.<sup>19</sup>

These actions were not the panacea to totally eliminate sexual harassment within the Air Force, however; they moved the Air Force one step closer towards eliminating the preponderance of unprofessional behavior within its corps.

In November 1995, the former Air Force Chief of Staff, General Ronald R Fogleman, articulated his message to the field commanders on their commander responsibilities:

Any conduct, in any unit, which creates a disadvantage based on race, ethnicity or gender will not be tolerated. Malicious or inappropriate behavior as well as different training standards cannot be permitted. Any indications that such behavior is occurring within a unit will prompt immediate investigation. Those responsible for such actions as well as commanders who fail to correct these problems will be held accountable.<sup>20</sup>

General Fogleman further outlined four pass/fail items for Air Force leaders:

We will not tolerate any religious, sexual or racial harassment. Period... There are several reasons for this. One, it's the right thing to do. Two, it's the law of the land. The third is more fundamental. We cannot expect people to achieve their maximum potential in an environment where harassment or prejudice exists. While we're reducing resources, to include people, every person has got to be in a working environment where they can achieve their full potential.<sup>21</sup>

Additionally, the Air Force established strict guidance for their wing commanders to hold Wing Climate Assessment Committee meetings at least twice a year to evaluate the overall human relations climate. Further to being the only service with a full-time enlisted EO advisor career field, the Air Force Chief of Staff, in October 1993, directed the realignment of the Air Force Social Actions office from the Mission Support Squadron to the wing commander's staff. The realignment now provides direct program emphasis and oversight, increases the visibility of the program and improves the wing commander's ability to respond to EO issues affecting readiness.<sup>22</sup> Not stopping there, the Air Force took a closer look at its policy statements, directives and messages in the field addressing its EO concerns. The following major documents were published or distributed to address EO and treatment programs:

- August 1994, Air Force Policy Directive 36-27, Social Actions program, provided policy guidance regarding unlawful discriminations and sexual harassment.
- August 1994, CSAF message to ALMAJCOM/CCs, sexual harassment, stated, “It is clear that our policy is zero tolerance.”
- February 1995, AFPAM 36-2705, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, for distribution to all Air Force personnel.
- November 1995, CSAF message ALMAJCOM/CCs “Command Responsibilities. Any conduct, in Any Unit, Which Creates a Disadvantage Based on Race, Ethnicity or Gender Will Not be Tolerated.”
- October 1996, revised Air Force Instruction 36-2706, Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program. This instruction implements recommendations from the Defense Equal Opportunity Council Task Force on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment.
- 1999, revised AFI 36-2909, Professional and Unprofessional Relationships<sup>23</sup>

Further addressed within AFI 36-2706, contains guidance to include the complaint processing procedures and grievance channels and processes, procedures and responsibilities of commanders and personnel to resolve complaints at the lowest level. The AFI delineates responsibilities as follows:<sup>24</sup>

- The responsibilities of the wing commander are to provide an environment free from discrimination and harassment, review all closed discrimination cases monthly.
- Unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment cases involving senior officials, general officers and Senior Executive Service (SES) equivalents are immediately forwarded and reported to the AF Inspector General in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. Cases involving colonels or colonel selects must also be reported to the IG.
- Reprisal complaints are immediately referred to the IG. Reprisal protection is mandated by law, DOD directive and AF Instruction.<sup>25</sup>

An Air Force Inspector General fraud, waste and abuse hot line has always been available whose sole purpose was to accept and investigate concerns expressed by Air Force members. However, a specific sexual harassment “1 – 800” hot line was established by the Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center reinforced the Air Force’s commitment to investigate equal opportunity and treatment complaints. Qualified Equal Opportunity Treatment (EOT) personnel staff the hotline.<sup>26</sup>

The Air Force has also recognized the threat sexual harassment poses to combat readiness and have aggressively attacked the problem. Even with the successes in the decline of sexual harassment complaints, the issues continues to demand constant attention.<sup>27</sup>

In summary, the DOD's senior leadership implemented an extensive sexual harassment awareness campaign to define and incorporate its "Zero Tolerance" policy throughout all services and levels of senior leadership. The establishment of the DEOC task force aided DOD in reviewing military services' discrimination complaints systems and providing meaningful solutions to combat sexual harassment incidents within the armed services. However, after polling its military men and women and analyzing the data from the survey provided from Forms A and B, senior leadership became amply aware of the magnitude and pervasiveness of the problem of sexual harassment within the armed services. The "Zero Tolerance" policy lays the foundation for its future commanders to build upon in order to prevent sexual harassment incidents from occurring within their units. Specifically, within the Air Force, senior leadership indorsed the SECDEF's policy and have actively pursued to market the policy by not only refining current Air Force Instructions, but by developing new Air Force Instructions to address its sexual harassment issues. This surely is a testimony that senior leadership is attuned to the problems of sexual harassment and its affects on readiness. Moreover, the key to establishing a viable sexual harassment policy relies heavily on the amount and types of training programs and preventive tools available to commanders as they work to prevent sexual harassment complaints within their units.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> McCann, Nancy DOD and McGinn, Thomas A. Harassed: 100 Women Define Inappropriate Behavior in the Workplace. Homewood, IL, Business One/Irwin, 1992 p.67

<sup>2</sup> Wagner, Ellen J. Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: How to Prevent, Investigate, and Resolve Problems in Your Organization. New York, AMACOM, 1992 p. 19-20

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<sup>3</sup> McCann, Nancy DOD and McGinn, Thomas A. Harassed: 100 Women Define Inappropriate Behavior in the Workplace. Homewood, IL, Business One/Irwin, 1992 p.80

<sup>4</sup> Executive Order 9981, On-line, Internet, 13 October 1998, Available from <http://www.Ibjlib.utexas.edu/truman/9981a.htm>

<sup>5</sup> American Forces Information Service News Articles; Cohen Targets Sexual Harassment, Online, Internet, 13 October 1998, Available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan1997/n01241997\\_9701248.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jan1997/n01241997_9701248.html)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 1-2

<sup>7</sup> Dorn, Edwin, *DOD Committed to Zero Tolerance of Sexual Harassment*. **Defense Issues** 12, no. 9: 1-4 '97

<sup>8</sup> Sexual Harassment Declining But Still Prevalent, **Defense** No. 4: 34-37 '96

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 34-37

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 34-37

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 34-37

<sup>12</sup> Bastian, Lisa D., Lancaster, Anita R. and Reyst, Heidi E. Department of Defense 1995 Sexual Harassment Survey, Arlington, VA, Defense Manpower Data Center, 1996, p. vi

<sup>13</sup> To Stop Harassment, Leaders Must Lead. Online, Internet, Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1995/di1064.html>

<sup>14</sup> Task Force on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, file://C:\REARCH\task force.htm

<sup>15</sup> DOD Committed to Zero Tolerance p. 3. News Release, Online Internet 2 July 1996, Available from [http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jul1996/b070296\\_bt410-96.html](http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Jul1996/b070296_bt410-96.html)

<sup>16</sup> Air Forces Approach to Ending Sexual Harassment. News Release, Online, Internet, Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1997/di1210.html>

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Bird, Julie, The War on Harassment, Services first female boss takes the hard line against sexual harassment, *Air Force Times* 55: 12 Apr 10 '95

<sup>19</sup> Air Forces Approach to Ending Sexual Harassment. News Release, Online, Internet, Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1997/di1210.html>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 2

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 2

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 4

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 5-6

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 8

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 8-9

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 9

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 10

## Chapter 3

### Training and Preventive Tools

*Equal opportunity is not just the right thing to do, it is a military and economic necessity.*

—Dr. William J. Perry Secretary of Defense, 1994

Another way to determine if a gap exists in the military’s sexual harassment “Zero Tolerance” policy between senior leaders and commanders who implement the policy, is to review the existing sexual harassment training programs and preventive tools available to future commanders. The essence of this study examines the employment of sexual harassment training programs, the amount and timeliness of the training, and the preventive tools available for commanders to combat sexual harassment within their unit.

As stated in the previous chapter, the SECDEF established the DEOC task force to review the military services’ discrimination complaints systems and recommend improvements, including the adoption of Department-wide standards.<sup>1</sup> The task force, headed by the Secretary of the Air Force and Under Secretary of Defense, Personnel and Readiness, also recommended 48 separate initiatives to resolve the DOD’s discrimination and harassment issues. One specific recommendation approved for adoption by the SECDEF was a push to improve training of sexual harassment within all the armed services.

In November 1996, the SECDEF ordered the Navy and Air Force to examine their service's sexual harassment training programs. The order came after the investigation by the Army sexual assault charges at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland and also as a result of the task force's survey in 1995. The intent of the order was to ensure that there was adequate screening of complaints and adequate efforts to find out if there were similar problems in the Navy and the Air Force.<sup>2</sup>

An even more pressing concern about sexual harassment sparked the SECDEF, when she reviewed comments highlighted in the survey from women respondents questioning leadership in their service. According to the survey, nearly one in 10 women in the Army or Marine Corps have been sexually assaulted. Both surveys conducted in 1988 and 1995 also identified that two in 10 women reported that they were targets of "sexual coercion," which the survey defined as instances in which job benefits or losses were conditioned on sexual cooperation.<sup>3</sup> The results further acknowledged that Army women have lost faith in their senior leadership efforts and the Marine Corps continues to have the highest rate of sexual harassment. Although these figures and comments seem alarming, there appeared to be a considerable decline in the number of women reporting sexual harassment behaviors from 64 percent in 1988 and 55 percent in 1995. The results showed that the Navy made the most progress since 1988 and the Air Force continues to have the lowest rate of sexual harassment.<sup>4</sup> However, the focus of this research will only explore the sexual harassment training programs and preventive tools employed by the Air Force senior leaders.

## **Training Program**

The Air Force has had a long-standing history in addressing its EO and sexual harassment issues. Much of the credit can be attributed to the Air Force's decision in the 1970s to provide in-depth race relations education to all military personnel and civilian employees using full-time qualified instructors trained at the Defense Race Relations Institute (now called Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute).<sup>5</sup> Also, in May 1982, the Air Force became the first service to institute mandatory Sexual Harassment Awareness Education (SHAE) classes for all personnel. In June 1984, SHAE was incorporated into the Air Force's Human Relations Education (HRE) course, which is also attended by all personnel. The curriculum is taught at accession points (Reserve Officer Training Corps, USAF Academy, Officer Training School, Officer Commissioning School, and Basic Military Training School) as well as in professional military education courses for officer and enlisted personnel.<sup>6</sup>

Additionally, the Air Force is the only service with a full-time enlisted equal opportunity career field drawn from volunteers who retrain from other career fields. These individuals attend a 15-week in residence training course to ensure personnel are instructed on all levels of Equal Opportunity issues.<sup>7</sup> Completion of this course certifies these individuals as qualified EO technicians equipped to aid commanders and supervisors on sexual harassment complaints or investigations. To ensure appropriate leadership oversight is available, the Deputy Chief of Staff, Personnel incorporated the military equal opportunity program as part of the Air Force Personnel Officer career field.

In November 1994, the Secretary of the Air Force, initiated sexual harassment training for all senior executives, to be conducted by the Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute (DEOMI), to include all new general and flag officers within the services as well as all new members of the Senior Executive Service.<sup>8</sup> One component of the senior level executive training was the development of the Senior Leader Equal Opportunity Survey (SLEOS). The SLEOS was designed to be a part of the curriculum for the two-day course and was geared to provide an opportunity to gather the EO views of the participating senior officers. The three purposes of the survey were: (1) to allow planning for the two-day senior executive level training curriculum; (2) to provide feedback to each senior executive level class concerning their EO perceptions and the EO perceptions of other senior leaders and military members; and (3) to create a frame of reference for briefing the officer concerning the results of an independent survey.<sup>9</sup>

During the same month, the Vice Commander, Air Education and Training Commander (AETC) directed an examination of how Equal Opportunity Treatment (EOT) is taught corporately and at the continuum of education—how EOT culture is infused for its officers within the Air Force. The findings of the examination show that the EOT education and training subjects include the following: discrimination, sexual harassment, prejudice, diversity, and human relations. Within the continuum of EOT education, the subjects previously mentioned are taught at the following: officer and enlisted accessions (AFJROTC, AFROTC, AFA, OTS, BMT), technical and flying training, first duty station and newcomers orientation, professional military education (PME), and professional continuing education. Throughout all of these training centers, the curriculum consists of at least one hour of EOT training, discussions of the current

(EOT/EO) policy and command and local policy. Specific sexual harassment training within officer PME instruction consists of

- *Squadron officer School.* Direct instruction (case studies, 1.8 hours of guided discussions, speakers, and lectures) and indirect instruction (1 hour discussion readings, 3 hours of lectures, discussions, leadership labs.) on interpersonal relations
- *Air Command and Staff College.* Direct instruction (1.5 hours of seminars; 61 pages of reading, 7 hours in videos) the focus is on managing diversity and other diversity issues. Indirect instruction (videos, additional readings)
- *Air War College.* Direct instruction (2 hours of seminar and videos) the focus is on sexual harassment, ethnic cultural and racial issues. Indirect instruction (1.5 hour lecture)
- *Commanders Professional Development.* Direct instruction 16 hours and indirect instruction 29 hours<sup>10</sup>

The sexual harassment training programs employed by the Air Force senior leaders is the initial mechanism to inculcate its “Zero Tolerance” policy to their future commanders. However, the true test is what preventative tools has the Air Force leaders for commanders to prevent harassment within their unit

## **Preventive Tools**

*Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers are encouraged to make necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring and clearly and regularly communicated to employees and effectively implemented.*

—Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, December 1992

Sexual harassment prevention is a three-tier process. First, the organization must establish an organizational policy; secondly, provide adequate sexual harassment training; and lastly, develop the necessary tools for its employers (synonymous with commanders) to prevent harassment within the working environment.

Employers who make the effort to prevent sexual harassment from occurring can benefit by avoiding a host of potential problems. Taking steps to prevent sexual

harassment before it occurs benefits the organization in many practical ways as well.<sup>11</sup>

An important prevention strategy includes conducting training on the following:

- What sexual harassment is and what it is not, from both legal and practical points of view
- The difference between sexual harassment and inappropriate conduct, and why both need to be banned from the workplace
- The types of sexual harassment and the implications for employer and person liability of each
- How internal investigations are triggered and what happens during such investigations
- The need for minimizing any discussion of sexual harassment situations, both formally and informally
- The legal and organizational requirements for non-retaliation against those who raise sexual harassment concerns
- The corporate options for post-investigation discipline and the factors that decision makers use in selecting that discipline
- External charge mechanisms
- What every supervisor and manager is expected to do in his or her own area to prevent sexual harassment from occurring, whether in terms of personal behavior, coworker relationships, or visitor conduct
- Who the designated organizational person to receive reports of possible sexual harassment is, and the need for early reporting.<sup>12</sup>

The Air Force tools available for commanders to prevent sexual harassment from occurring within their units come in the form of: Air Force policy directives, Air Force instructions, Air Force pamphlets and messages to the field. The major documents defining its policies on prevention are:

- August 1994, Air Force Policy Directive 36-27, Social Actions Program provided policy guidance regarding unlawful discriminations and sexual harassment.
- August 1994, CSAF message to ALMAJCOM/CCs, Sexual Harassment, stated, “It is clear that our policy is zero tolerance.”
- February 1995, AFPAM 36-2705, Discrimination and Sexual Harassment, for distribution to all Air Force personnel.
- November 1995, CSAF message ALMAJCOM/CCs “Command Responsibilities. Any conduct, in Any Unit, Which Creates a Disadvantage Based on Race, Ethnicity of Gender Will Not be Tolerated.”
- October 1996, revised Air Force Instruction 36-2706, Military Equal Opportunity and Treatment Program. This instruction implements recommendations from the Defense Equal Opportunity Council Task Force on Discrimination and Sexual Harassment.

- 1999, revised AFI 36-2909, Professional and Unprofessional Relationships<sup>13</sup>

Further addressed within AFI 36-2706, contains guidance to include the complaint processing procedures and grievance channels and processes, procedures and responsibilities of commanders and personnel to resolve complaints at the lowest level.

The AFI delineates responsibilities as follows:

- The responsibilities of the wing commander are to provide an environment free from discrimination and harassment, review all closed discrimination cases monthly.
- Unlawful discrimination or sexual harassment cases involving senior officials, general officers and Senior Executive Service (SES) equivalents are immediately forwarded and reported to the AF Inspector General in the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force. Cases involving colonels or colonel selects must also be reported to the IG.
- Reprisal complaints are immediately referred to the IG. Reprisal protection is mandated by law, DOD directive and AF Instruction.<sup>14</sup>

An Air Force Inspector General, fraud, waste, and abuse hot line is also available whose sole purpose was to accept and investigate concerns expressed by Air Force members. However, a specific Sexual Harassment “1 – 800” hot line was established by the Headquarters Air Force Personnel Center reinforced the Air Force’s commitment to investigate equal opportunity and treatment complaints. Qualified Equal Opportunity Treatment (EOT) personnel staff this hot line.<sup>15</sup>

Additionally, the Air Education and Training Command developed a Student Bill of Rights card (pocket size) which is given upon arrival at basic military training, Officer Training School, Air Force Reserve Officer Training Course detachments, and to newly arrived students at technical training schools. The Bill of Rights card addresses fair treatment, accountability, professionalism, and lists telephone numbers for squadron commanders, the EO office, the Inspector General and the hotline for unlawful discrimination, and sexual harassment<sup>16</sup>

In summary, Air Force senior leadership has made a poignant attempt in designing a viable sexual harassment training program and preventive tools to its future commanders to eliminate the manifestation of harassment within the Air Force. Air Force senior leaders have incorporated sexual harassment training both at the point of entry into the military and throughout all officers' PME programs to include senior leadership (0-7 and above) level at their professional commanders course. The Air Force's sexual harassment training conducted at officers' PME instruction focuses on the areas such as: sexual harassment issues, human relations, and cultural diversity. The Secretary of the Air Force endorses the sexual harassment training programs stating that the Air Force's program is 99 percent on target.

Additionally, Air Force senior leader have given commanders' tools that will enable them to prevent harassment from occurring within their units. The Student Bill of Rights developed by AETC is but one-method commanders can use to teach their subordinates the Air Force's "Zero Tolerance" policy. Furthermore, the sexual harassment "1-800" hotline, IG, and the Air Force Instructions are also another means of prevention or avenues available to commanders and their subordinates and proves to be a show of concern by senior leadership that any form of harassment will not be tolerated. Although the Air Force has taken an active role in training and equipping future commanders with tools necessary to combat sexual harassment, the final test is to assess their effectiveness based on the feedback from future commanders.

## **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> Summary of the Department of Defense 1995 Sexual Harassment, Department of Defense 1995 Sexual Harassment Study

<sup>2</sup> DOD Orders Services to Review Sexual Harassment Training, American Forces Information Service, Internet, Online, Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/>

## Notes

<sup>3</sup> Air Force Times, The War on Harassment, November 11, 1996, p. 9

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 10

<sup>5</sup> Defense Issues, Air Force's Approach on Ending Sexual Harassment, Vol 12, no. 10, p. 4

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 4

<sup>8</sup> Hochhaus, Larry Ph.D., Defense Equal Opportunity Management Institute, Directorate of Research, A Content Analysis of Written Comments to the Senior Leader Equal Opportunity Survey (SLEOS)

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 1

<sup>10</sup> Briefing, AETC/CV, subject: Air Force Equal Opportunity and Treatment Education and Training, 23 February 1994

<sup>11</sup> Wagner, Ellen J., Sexual Harassment in the Workplace, "How to Prevent, Investigate and Resolve Problems In Your Organization., p. 121, 1992

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 123

<sup>13</sup> Air Forces Approach to Ending Sexual Harassment, vol 12, no. 10, p. 5-6, News Release, Online, Internet, Available From <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/1997/dil210.html>

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 8-9

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 123

## **Chapter 4**

### **Analysis of Field Grader Survey**

Finally, as a way to measure if a gap exists in the military's sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and commanders, is to assess the opinions of majors who are considered our military's future commanders and also those commanders who are responsible for implementing and applying the SECDEF's "Zero Tolerance" policy.

#### **Survey Design and Administration**

Two surveys were used for this study. The first, survey A, was administered on 1-3 February 1999. It consisted of a 22 open-ended questionaire accompanied by an introductory letter explaining the survey which was distributed to 150 Army, Navy, Marine Corps, and Air Force majors and DOD civilian personnel (GS-13/14) attending the 1998-99 academic school year of the Air Command Staff College (ACSC) in-residence course. Of the surveys received, 66 were completed, for a response rate of 44 percent. The 22 open-ended survey evaluates the SECDEF's sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance" policy and allows respondents to comment on the policy and effectiveness of the sexual harassment training programs in preparing commanders in dealing with sexual harassment issues.

The research data analyzed by survey A represents only ten percent of the population, therefore, this study is only considered a snapshot and is not assumed to be representative of the opinions of the majority of personnel who fit in this category. However, the survey passed the

reliability test and was used in this research to locate the gap in the military's sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and commanders. The main purpose of the survey was to determine: (1) if sexual harassment training should be eliminated; (2) if the policy is understandable; (3) if the training was sufficient; and (4) if a commander could conduct a fair and competent inquiry of a sexual harassment complaint, based upon his/her training.

The second, survey B, which differed from survey A was administered on 23-27 April 1999. This survey was expanded to assess the opinions of squadron commanders. It consisted of a 24 open-ended questionnaire and was administered to 10 field grade officers assigned to ACSC. The survey evaluates the SECDEF's sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance" policy from the perspective of commanders, unlike survey A where the responses of the survey came from the view of future commanders. The focus of this analysis was to assess the differences in sexual harassment training received by commanders from future commanders. The purpose of this survey was to determine if sexual harassment training was adequate for commanders: (1) to conduct a fair and competent inquiry; (2) to determine if they are prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues; and (3) if the training they received was sufficient.

### **Analytic Approach**

The analysis of survey A was calculated using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS/PC+) for the purpose of factor analyzing the responses. While many questions in Part II (Appendix A) covered a broad spectrum of responses, the research limited the analysis only on the areas of interest: "Zero Tolerance" policy, training programs, and prevention programs. Therefore, to reduce the number of variables to be analyzed, only questions 11,14-15, and 17-19 were factor analyzed. This resulted into six categories. The factor analysis will be cross-tabulated by gender to determine if there are significant differences between the responses of

men and those of women concerning the validity of the SECDEF's policy, effectiveness and timeliness of training for commanders to conduct a fair and impartial sexual harassment inquiry.

Survey B (Appendix B) also covers a broad spectrum of responses, however, this research is only addressing the responses to questions 18-21. Unlike survey B, no categories will be factor-analyzed and the results of the data will be based on average responses in the form of percentage values to those questions. These responses will provide this research with a baseline of how well our commanders are prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues.

## **Major Findings**

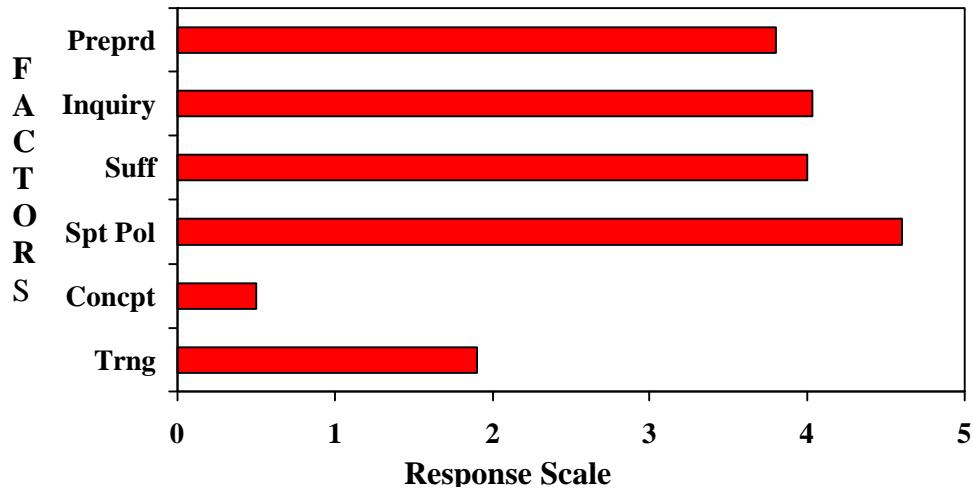
This section is divided into three parts. The first part as shown in Figures 3 through 8 represents the average responses of men and women. Whereas the second part, as shown in Figures 9 through 14 will be a cross-tabulation by gender (men and women) to determine if there are differences in their responses to the same questions. The third section, since the population is small, will be depicted as a narrative description of the responses provided by the commanders. The following categories shown in Table 3, were the responses used for the both surveys:

**Table 3. Category Responses**

1 = <i>Totally Disagree</i> with the statement
2 = <i>moderately disagree</i> with the statement
3 = <i>neither agree nor disagree</i> with the statement
4 = <i>moderately agree</i> with the statement
5 = <i>totally agree</i> with the statement

- Figure 2 displays the average combined responses of both men and women to the survey questions that were factored analyzed for this research. (Appendix). The chart shows the factors that were analyzed for this research which are the following: sexual harassment training program (TRNG), Secretary of Defense's "Zero Tolerance" policy (CONCPT), support of the "Zero Tolerance" policy (SPT POL), sufficient training (SUFFTNG), sexual harassment inquiry (INQUIRY), and training preparation to deal

with sexual harassment issues (PREPRD). The specific analysis of each factor will be discussed in-depth in figures 3 through 8.



**Figure 2. Average Responses To Open-ended Questions**

- **Figure 3, (TRNG): The sexual harassment training program in my service or agency has served its purpose and should be eliminated.** Over 71 percent of the respondents believe training should continue. However, a significant number of responses, 16 percent would agree it should be eliminated, with 12 percent undecided.

TRNG				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 1.00	37	56.1	56.1	56.1
2.00	10	15.2	15.2	71.2
3.00	8	12.1	12.1	83.3
4.00	5	7.6	7.6	90.9
5.00	6	9.1	9.1	100.0
Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 3. Elimination Of Training**

- **Figure 4, (CONCPT): I fully understand the concept of “Zero Tolerance” as outlined by the Secretary of Defense.** Over 72 percent of the respondents fully understand the concept of “Zero Tolerance” as outlined by the Secretary of Defense, leaving a small percentage, (4.5 percent) either moderately or totally do not understand the concept.

### CONCPT

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2.00	2	3.0	3.0	4.5
	3.00	3	4.5	4.5	9.1
	4.00	12	18.2	18.2	27.3
	5.00	48	72.7	72.7	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 4. Secretary Of Defense’s “Zero Tolerance” Policy**

- **Figure 5, (SPT POL): I fully support the “Zero Tolerance” sexual harassment policy in my service.** Over 92 percent of the respondents polled support the sexual harassment “Zero Tolerance” policy. The other 6 percent disagree or totally disagree with the policy, leaving 1.5 percent undecided.

### SPT POL

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	2	3.0	3.0	3.0
	2.00	2	3.0	3.0	6.1
	3.00	1	1.5	1.5	7.6
	4.00	10	15.2	15.2	22.7
	5.00	51	77.3	77.3	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 5. Support Of The “Zero Tolerance Policy”**

- **Figure 6, (SUFFTNG): I have received sufficient sexual harassment training in my career.** Over three-fourths of the respondents polled agree that they have received a sufficient amount of sexual harassment training. However, there still exists a considerable amount, 25 percent, who disagree.

### SUFFTNG

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	3	4.5	4.5	4.5
	2.00	8	12.1	12.1	16.7
	3.00	5	7.6	7.6	24.2
	4.00	14	21.2	21.2	45.5
	5.00	36	54.5	54.5	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 6. Sufficient Training**

- **Figure 7 (INQUIRY):** Based upon the amount of sexual harassment training I received, I would be prepared to conduct a fair and competent inquiry into a complaint as commander. Over 69 percent of the respondents believed that they could conduct a fair and competent inquiry. However, a fair amount of respondents 16 percent who do not feel competent and another 13 percent of respondents undecided.

### INQUIRY

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	1	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2.00	10	15.2	15.2	16.7
	3.00	9	13.6	13.6	30.3
	4.00	12	18.2	18.2	48.5
	5.00	34	51.5	51.5	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 7. Sexual Harassment Inquiry**

- **Figure 8 (PREPRD):** If selected to be a commander, the training I received has prepared me to deal with sexual harassment issues. The response to this question was quite similar to the previous question, 69 percent of respondents believed they are prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues. However, there was a decrease of 6 percentage points compared to the previous question (Figure 7) who were undecided.

### PREPRD

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1.00	4	6.1	6.1	6.1
	2.00	11	16.7	16.7	22.7
	3.00	5	7.6	7.6	30.3
	4.00	20	30.3	30.3	60.6
	5.00	26	39.4	39.4	100.0
	Total	66	100.0	100.0	

**Figure 8. Training Preparation To Deal With Sexual Harassment Issues.**

### Cross Tabulations by Gender

The following section of the analysis represents the cross tabulations of responses between 48 men and 18 women, which is characterized in the gender column 2 and 1 respectively. The categories of responses remain the same as the previous analysis (Table 3).

- Figure 9 shows that the majority of women, 10 of 18, (55 percent) and men, 37 of 48, (77 percent) responded that sexual harassment training should not be eliminated. However, 22 percent of men recommended that it should be eliminated, with 44 percent of women undecided.

### Crosstab

Count		TRNG					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00						18
	2.00	37	10	8	5	6	48
	Total	37	10	8	5	6	66

**Figure 9. Elimination Of Training**

- Figure 10 depicts that men and women, 100 percent and 66 percent respectively, understand the SECDEF'S "Zero Tolerance" policy. However, there are at least 16 percent of women who do not understand and another 16 percent of women who are unsure of the policy.

**Crosstab**

Count		CONCPT					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00	1	2	3	12		18
	2.00					48	48
Total		1	2	3	12	48	66

**Figure 10. Understanding Of The “Zero Tolerance” Concept**

- Figure 11 shows that the responses from men (100 percent) and women (72 percent) in support of the “Zero Tolerance” policy. Again, there is a considerable amount of women (22 percent) who do not support the policy.

**Crosstab**

Count		SPT POL					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00	2	2	1	10	3	18
	2.00					48	48
Total		2	2	1	10	51	66

**Figure 11. Support Of The “Zero Tolerance” policy.**

- Figure 12 shows that the responses by gender differed greatly when asked the question about receiving a sufficient amount of sexual harassment training. Once again, 100 percent of the men believed that they had received a sufficient amount of training, while over 61 percent of women responded with not receiving an adequate amount of sexual harassment training. Additionally, 28 percent of women were undecided.

**GENDER \* SUFFTNG Crosstabulation**

Count		SUFFTNG					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00	3	8	5	2		18
	2.00				12	36	48
Total		3	8	5	14	36	66

**Figure 12. Sufficient Amount of Sexual Harassment Training**

- Figure 13 shows that there is a dichotomy in the responses to the question whether men and women are prepared to conduct a sexual harassment inquiry. One hundred percent

of men responded they have received a proper amount of training to conduct a fair and competent sexual harassment complaint inquiry. However, 61 percent of women disagreed and 38 percent undecided about the amount of training received to conduct a sexual harassment inquiry fairly.

**Crosstab**

Count		INQUIRY					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00	1	10	7			18
	2.00			2	12	34	48
Total		1	10	9	12	34	66

**Figure 13. Prepared To Conduct A Sexual Harassment Inquiry**

- Figure 14 shows that the responses between men and women mirror greatly to that of the previous question of preparedness to conduct a sexual harassment inquiry (Figure 13). Over 83 percent of women do not feel that they are prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues with another 16 percent who are unsure. However, there is an overwhelming response by men, 95 percent that they are prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues as a commander.

**Crosstab**

Count		PREPRD					Total
		1.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	
GENDER	1.00	4	11	3			18
	2.00			2	20	26	48
Total		4	11	5	20	26	66

**Figure 14. Prepared To Deal With Sexual Harassment Issues.**

The final section of the analysis represents the responses by commanders and their opinions to questions 18-21 (see Appendix B). The categories of responses remain the same as shown in Table 3.

**Question # 18: I have received sufficient sexual harassment training in my career.**

There was an overwhelming response by all commanders 60 percent moderately agree and 40 percent totally agree that they have received a sufficient amount of sexual harassment training throughout their careers.

**Question #19: Based upon previous sexual harassment training and the training I received at my service's squadron commanders course, I am prepared to conduct a fair and competent inquiry into a sexual harassment complaint.**

The responses to this question ranged from totally disagree to totally agree. Over 60 and 30 percent of commanders moderately and totally agreed, respectively, to being prepared to conduct a fair and competent sexual harassment inquiry, leaving 10 percent of the commanders totally disagreeing with being prepared to conduct a harassment inquiry.

**Question #20: The squadron commander's course provided me with the tools and knowledge necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring in my unit.**

The vast majority of the responses to this question ranged from 20 percent neither agreed/disagreed to 50 percent of the commander moderately disagreed that the squadron commanders course aided them in preventing sexual harassment from occurring in their units or provided them the necessary tools to deal with harassment issues. However, there were 30 percent of the responses that moderately agreed that their squadron commander's course was effective.

**Questions #21: I am prepared to deal with all types of sexual harassment issues.**

The overwhelming majority of the commanders 60 and 40 percent, moderately and totally agree, respectively to being prepared to deal with all types of sexual harassment issues.

## **Summary of Findings**

The primary focus of this analysis was to determine if a gap exists in the military's sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and commanders who implement and apply the SECDEF's policy. The overall, assessment of the responses of survey A when calculated together (women and men), concerning the policy were favorable. Over 92 and 72 percent

respectively, support and understand the Secretary of Defense's sexual harassment "Zero Tolerance" policy. Another 71 percent responded that sexual harassment training should continue. When asked the questions about the preparedness as a commander to deal with sexual harassment issues and ability to conduct a fair and competent inquiry, 69 percent of the respondents on both questions agreed or strongly agreed that they were prepared. After comparing the responses to the same questions between genders, 72 percent of women and 100 percent of men support the policy and 66 percent of women and 100 percent of men understand the policy. Another 55 percent of women and 77 percent of men responded that training should continue. Unfortunately, the responses to the same questions on sexual harassment training as it relates to specific responses were not as favorable; the responses differed greatly. Hence, a gap in the military's sexual harassment policy exists.

The gap in the military's sexual harassment policy exists as identified by the analysis between the responses of women and men on the amount of sexual harassment training they received, their ability to deal with sexual harassment issues, and their ability to conduct a fair and impartial sexual harassment inquiry. While the majority of men (100 percent) believe that they received a sufficient amount of sexual harassment training, 61 percent of women disagreed, with another 28 percent undecided. When asked the questions about preparedness to deal with sexual harassment issues and ability to conduct a fair and competent inquiry, women responded 83 and 61 percent, respectively, that they were ill prepared. However, when men were asked the same questions, 95 and 100 percent responded favorably. In essence, this analysis shows that there is a dichotomy in the perceptions of women and of men as it relates to the sexual harassment training programs provided by Air Force senior leaders. Specifically, women perceive that the training is not sufficient and lacks the quality and depth for women to deal with and respond to

sexual harassment behaviors. As a consequence, women's leadership abilities are hampered in trying to prevent and combat harassment in their working environment. As a result, senior leaders not only have a harassment problem but potentially may be setting themselves up with having a readiness issue as well

The responses of survey B as is relates to the sexual harassment training provided to commanders was favorable. The analysis shows that 100 percent of the commanders moderately or totally agreed that they have had a sufficient amount of sexual harassment training throughout their careers. These same percentages mirrored that to the amount of sexual harassment training received to conduct a fair and competent inquiry or complaint. However, there was a small percentage (10) of commanders totally disagreed with their ability to conduct a fair and competent inquiry. The responses by commanders commenting on sexual harassment training provided by their MAJCOM (squadron commanders course) shows that there is a deficiency in their sexual harassment training curriculum. Over 50 percent of the respondents moderately disagreed with the effectiveness of the training, with another 20 percent undecided, leaving 30 percent only moderately agreeing with the effectiveness of the sexual harassment training provided by their MAJCOM.

Bottomline, there is a gap in our military's sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and commanders who implement the policy. Refinement of the sexual harassment training program to ensure that the quality and depth of the issues being taught to women requires an investigation by our senior leaders... Without this refinement, the Air Force may be faced with more than just a harassment issue, ultimately it could become a morale issue. Senior leaders have achieved some major successes in preventing harassment in the military. Unfortunately, it is of no value if it cannot be applied and implemented by all commanders, namely women.



## **Chapter 5**

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

Over half a decade DOD's senior leaders have been active in trying to find ways to eradicate sexual harassment behavior within the armed services. The establishment of the Secretary of Defense's "Zero Tolerance" policy in 1994 as discussed in this research, is one of many antidotes used by senior leaders towards regaining control of this pervasive problem. Adopted and marketed by all service secretaries, "Zero Tolerance" is the sexual harassment deterrent buzzword for the new millennium.

The Secretary of the Air Force along with all the other service secretaries stand firmly on controlling the sexual harassment behaviors within their military environment. Two techniques used by Air Force senior leaders to control sexual harassment behaviors within its corps have been through its expansion of sexual harassment awareness training and preventive tools. These programs and tools are designed to aid future commanders as well as all military personnel, towards combating harassment within their units. Sexual harassment training has already been expanded at undergraduate level schools such as ROTC, OTS, and the Air Force academy, to include additional instruction at officer PME schools. The Air Force prevention programs consist of numerous developments of Air Force instructions and messages. The Air Education and Training Command developed a Student Bill of Rights Card which lists the rights of students, contains a number for reporting problems to their chain of command, wing Social

Actions office, IG and a “1-800” sexual harassment hotline number. Squadron commanders attend a 2-week course by their MAJCOM providing them additional sexual harassment training prior to assuming command of a unit. Certainly, this is a proclamation proving that senior leaders are attuned to their sexual harassment problems. Unfortunately, this is not true in all areas. The paper proves that there is a gap in the military’s sexual harassment policy. Although the amount of training is provided to men and women equally, there is an apparent deficiency in that the program is unable to meet the expectations of women.

The analysis of this research has proven that senior leaders have a deficiency in their sexual harassment training program specifically as it relates to training women. The deficiency exists in the amount of sexual harassment training especially those designed to prepare commanders to deal with and conduct fair and competent inquiries. The analysis of the survey show that over 61 percent of women do not feel that they have received a sufficient amount of training, 83 percent are not prepared to deal with sexual harassment issues and another 61 percent who are also not prepared to conduct a fair and competent sexual harassment inquiry. On the other hand, over 95 percent men feel that the sexual harassment training is sufficient and has prepared them to deal with sexual harassment behaviors. Why does this gap exist? Unfortunately, the scope of this research is limited only to identifying if is a gap exists, well it does, the military’s sexual harassment training program.

## **Recommendation**

This paper is a by-product of the opinions of only 66 majors within the armed services. As a means to bridge the gap in the military’s sexual harassment policy between senior leaders and their future and current female commanders will require a further study to assess why women feel that the sexual harassment training is deficient. Also, another analysis needs to be

conducted to determine why men feel that the training was sufficient. Could it be that the sexual harassment training is not effective and does not touch the heart of the issue, or maybe the instruction is too vague? Could it be that men are paying lip service to the entire program and have become apathetic to the training? Or are women being overly sensitive? Recommend this research be provided to DEOMI to conduct further analysis of all these issues. Additionally, recommend that senior leaders conduct a survey to validate deficiencies in the training program to ascertain the quality and depth of instruction provided to their female officers.

## Appendix A

## Survey A

## Part I

## Demographics

In this section, please tell us some things about yourself. This information will be used for statistical analysis. *Your responses will be held confidential.*

### 1. I am:

1 = female

2 = male

2. My racial/ethnic group is:

1 = American Indian or Alaskan Native

2 = Asian or Pacific Islander

3 = African-American (not of Hispanic origin)

4 = Hispanic

5 = White (not of Hispanic origin)

6 = Other

3. I am a(n):

1 = officer

2 = Federal civilian (DOD affiliated)

3 = Federal civilian (not DOD affiliated)

4 = other

4. If commissioned officer, what pay grade?

1 = O6

2 = O5

3 = O4

4 = I'm not an officer

5. My age is:

1 = under 30 years

2 = 31 – 35

3 = 36 – 40

4 = 41—45

5 = 46 – 50

6 = 51 or over

6. My military appointment is with the:

1 = Air Force

2 = Army

3 = Navy

4 = Marine Corps

5 = Coast Guard

6 = Other

7. My organization is best described as:

1 = active duty military

2 = Reserve

3 = National Guard

4 = other

8. I have personally experienced an incident of sexual harassment.

1 = Yes 2 = No (mark #9-10 – N/A)

9. I filed a complaint on the incident:

1 = Yes   2 = No   6 = N/A

10. I was satisfied with the disposition of the complaint that I filed:

1 = Yes   2 = No   6 = N/A

## Part II

### Sexual Harassment Awareness Training

Use the scale below to indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements.

- 1 = ***Totally Disagree*** with the statement
- 2 = ***moderately disagree*** with the statement
- 3 = ***neither agree nor disagree*** with the statement
- 4 = ***moderately agree*** with the statement
- 5 = ***totally agree*** with the statement

11. The sexual harassment training program in my Service or agency has served its purpose and should be eliminated.

Overall, my Service does an excellent job of providing sexual harassment training to all members.

The sexual harassment climate in my Service or agency is better than it is in any other Service or agency.

I fully understand the concept of “Zero Tolerance” as outlined by the Secretary of Defense.

I fully support the “Zero Tolerance” of sexual harassment policy in my Service.

The sexual harassment policy in my Service is highly effective.

I have received sufficient sexual harassment training in my career.

Based upon the amount of Sexual harassment training I received, I would be prepared to conduct a fair and competent inquiry into a complaint as commander.

If selected to be a commander, the training I received has prepared me to deal with sexual harassment issues.

### **Part III**

The following questions directly affect the timeliness of sexual harassment training.

When was the last time you received sexual harassment training?

1 = within the last year

2 = 2 – 4 years

3 = 5 – 7 years

4 = 8 – 10 years

5 = never

How many hours of sexual harassment training have you received in the last two years?

1 = 0 – 4 hours

2 = 5 – 8 hours

3 = 9 – 12 hour

4 = 13 – 16 hours

5 = over 17 hours

Where was most of your sexual harassment training during the last two years received?

1 = ROTC/Military Academy

2 = Professional Military Education School

3 = Base/wing/post provided

4 = MAJCOM/MACOM/Staff provided

5 = other

## **Appendix B**

### **Survey B**

#### **Part I**

##### **Demographics**

In this section, please tell us some things about yourself. This information will be used for statistical analysis. *Your responses will be held confidential.*

1. I am:

1 = female                            2 = male

2. My racial/ethnic group is:

1 = American Indian or Alaskan Native

2 = Asian or Pacific Islander

3 = African-American (not of Hispanic origin)

4 = Hispanic

5 = White (not of Hispanic origin)

6 = Other

3. I am a(n):

1 = officer

2 = Federal civilian (DOD affiliated)

3 = Federal civilian (not DOD affiliated)

4 = other

4. If commissioned officer, what pay grade?

1 = O6

2 = O5

3 = O4

4 = I'm not an officer

5. My age is:

1 = under 30 years

2 = 31 – 35

3 = 36 – 40

4 = 41—45

5 = 46 – 50

6 = 51 or over

6. My military appointment is with the:

1 = Air Force

2 = Army

3 = Navy

4 = Marine Corps

5 = Coast Guard

6 = Other

7. My organization is best described as:

1 = active duty military

2 = Reserve

3 = National Guard

4 = other

8. I have served as a squadron commander or equivalent in my service:

1 = yes    2 = No    6 = N/A

9. I have personally experienced an incident of sexual harassment.

1 = Yes 2 = No (mark #9-10 – N/A)

10. I filed a complaint on the incident:

1 = Yes 2 = No 6 = N/A

11. I was satisfied with the disposition of the complaint that I filed:

1 = Yes 2 = No 6 = N/A

## Part II

### Sexual Harassment Awareness Training

Use the scale below to indicate your degree of agreement with the following statements.

1 = <b><i>Totally Disagree</i></b> with the statement
2 = <b><i>moderately disagree</i></b> with the statement
3 = <b><i>neither agree nor disagree</i></b> with the statement
4 = <b><i>moderately agree</i></b> with the statement

12. The sexual harassment training program in my Service or agency has served its purpose and should be eliminated.

13. Overall, my Service does an excellent job of providing sexual harassment training to all members.

14. The sexual harassment climate in my Service or agency is better than it is in any other Service or agency.

15. I fully understand the concept of “Zero Tolerance” as outlined by the Secretary of Defense.

16. I fully support the “Zero Tolerance” of sexual harassment policy in my Service.

17. The sexual harassment policy in my Service is highly effective.

18. I have received sufficient sexual harassment training in my career.

19. Based upon previous sexual harassment training and the training I received at my service’s squadron commanders course, I am prepared to conduct a fair and competent inquiry into a sexual harassment complaint.

20. The squadron commander’s course provided me with the tools and knowledge necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring in my unit.

21. I am prepared to deal with all types of sexual harassment issues.

## **Part III**

The following questions directly affect the timeliness of sexual harassment training.

22. When was the last time you received sexual harassment training?

1 = within the last year

2 = 2 – 4 years

3 = 5 – 7 years

4 = 8 – 10 years

5 = never

23. How many hours of sexual harassment training have you received in the last two years?

1 = 0 – 4 hours

2 = 5 – 8 hours

3 = 9 – 12 hour

4 = 13 – 16 hours

5 = over 17 hours

24. Where was most of your sexual harassment training during the last two years received?

1 = ROTC/Military Academy

2 = Professional Military Education School

3 = Base/wing/post provided

4 = MAJCOM/MACOM/Staff provided

5 = other

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